

Concerns for the Traffic Impact of the Proposed Franklin Ash Landfill

Madam Chair, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Jennifer Davis-Muller a concerned resident of Franklin, and I am here to speak in strong opposition to proposed bill SB 3 "AN ACT PROHIBITING THE ACQUISITION OR USE OF CERTAIN PARCELS OF LAND AS ASH RESIDUE DISPOSAL AREAS."

The route that vehicles would take to and from the proposed site is Route 32. It is a two lane State route that runs through Franklin from its intersection with Route 2 to the Lebanon town line. It carries high traffic volumes with an ADT (Average Daily Traffic) that exceeds 19,000 vehicle per day. It also carries high peak rush hour traffic that exceeds 1800 vehicles per hour. This is the only feasible route to access the proposed landfill site in Franklin. CRRA proposes to send 60 fully loaded dump trucks (weighing up to 80,000 lbs.) per day to and from the landfill site (120 total trips equaling 120 trucks added to Route 32 each day).

Route 32 is a non-limited access roadway that is intersected by town roads. There are many commercial and private driveways that ingress and egress directly onto Route 32. The vertical and horizontal alignment of the road varies greatly from sharp curves, steep grades, rolling hills, and straightaways. There are two signalized intersections, one of which is at the bottom of a steep grade with a poor sight line to the traffic lights. The posted speed limit varies, however, the observed speeds often exceed 60 mph. There are sections of the roadway that freeze in the wintertime and flood during heavy rain events. There are homes and obstructions in close proximity to the roadway.

All of the above factors are a recipe for motor vehicle accidents. In fact, (according to the D.O.T.'s Traffic Accident Viewing System (TAVS), available on their website) from 2003 to 2007 there were:

- 285 accidents along Route 32 in the Town of Franklin.
- These accidents involved 507 vehicles in total,
- Over 17% of these vehicles were trucks.
- Over 49% of these accidents occurred at the intersection of roads and driveways.
- Speeding and Tailgating accounted for over 48% of these accidents.
- 139 injuries resulted from these accidents, including 1 fatality.

Many of our own residents have been hit entering Route 32 from a side street or their own driveway (might want to add name here... Buffy, specifics of accident, etc.). Others have been rear-ended attempting to turn off of Route 32. It is simply a dangerous stretch of road.

The thought of adding an additional 60, extremely heavy, hard to stop, dump trucks is unconscionable. State Routes in general, such as Route 32, are the most dangerous roadways in Connecticut. Per the D.O.T.'s report, "Connecticut Traffic Accident Facts 2006" (available on the D.O.T. website), from 1997 to 2006:

- Over 51% of all accidents occurred on State Routes, such as Route 32.
- Over 39% of all injuries occurred on State Routes, such as Route 32.
- Over 46% of all fatalities occurred on State Routes, such as Route 32.

Accidents involving dump trucks like the ones that will transport ash along Route 32 can be devastating. Everyone probably remembers the dump truck that lost its brakes traveling down Avon Mountain on July 29, 2005... It smashed into 19 vehicles, and killed 4 people before finally coming to a stop. This is a serious concern for the residents of Franklin. A risk that we should not have to take.

Environmentally speaking, the diesel engines are noisy and will produce a significant amount of air pollution. They will also be carrying wetted toxic ash that has the potential to leak from the truck bodies and/or be spilled during an accident. According to a Greenpeace International investigative study done 1997 a conclusion was reached that "Leftover incinerator ash is extremely toxic, containing concentrated amounts of lead, cadmium and other heavy metals. It can also contain dioxins and other toxic chemicals". In May of 1994 a letter was sent from J. Thomas Cochran Executive Director, US Conference of Mayors to Carol Browner US EPA Administrator asking that the newly developed testing procedures on incinerator ash be overturned. As stated in the letter the new testing procedures would categorize incinerator ash as Hazardous Waste requiring expensive containment procedures that according to Mr. Cochran would be too expensive for everyone involved to carry out. Under pressure Administrator Carol Browner agreed and in January of 1995 Administrator Browner announced that, although the content of the ash had not changed, incinerator ash would no longer be classified as hazardous. Who is going to monitor these trucks to ensure that they are not leaking as they travel down the road, and that they are washed before leaving the incinerator and landfill sites? Spills and accidents occur everyday, the town of Franklin has no police department, and only a small volunteer fire department. What will happen when the inevitably accident or spill occurs while trucking ash to the landfill. Spills, while bad, can be cleaned up. Fatalities and debilitating injuries, on the other hand, can not be undone. The town school buses follow this route. The trucks will be passing large poultry farms that produce eggs for distribution all over New England and a large international animal nutrition products distributor. The toxic incinerator ash problem in Franklin could quickly become much larger contamination issue. Again, we the people of Franklin should not have to assume this risk.